

Saturday, May 1, 2010

(Published in the Bainbridge *Post-Searchlight*)

To The Editor:

I am grateful for the opportunity to respond to and correct the numerous false assertions of the Letter to the Editor written by Lake Adams, which appeared in the Saturday, April 24 edition of the Bainbridge Post-Searchlight.

First, my voting record clearly demonstrates that I am not a so-called “puppet” of Speaker Pelosi and President Obama. For example, I received an “A+” by the National Rifle Association for my support of Second Amendment rights. Speaker Pelosi and then-Senator Obama, on the other hand, have received grades of “F.” I also differ from Speaker Pelosi in my opposition to same-sex marriage, support for constitutional amendments to balance the federal budget and prohibit flag desecration, support for prayer in school and public places, and my advocacy for tough abortion restrictions in the health care reform law.

My vote does not belong to the President. Nor does it belong to Speaker Pelosi, nor any political affiliation. My vote belongs to the people of Georgia’s 2nd Congressional District, and they always have been, and always will be, my priority in Washington.

Second, his assertion that I do not care about the high cancer rates in the 2nd District is completely false. As a member of the House Appropriations Committee, I have strongly supported increased funding for scientific research to find a cure for cancer.

I secured \$100,000 for the renovation of the Albany Middle School that Phoebe Putney converted into a cancer center where clinical trials are conducted. Additionally, the new health reform law includes a number of important provisions that will greatly benefit cancer patients. For example, the law refocuses the health care system to emphasize prevention, prohibits the practice of denying coverage because of pre-existing conditions, limits the cost burden on families by providing more effective and cost-efficient care, and places renewed emphasis on patients’ quality of life.

In the 2nd District of Georgia, there are 83,000 uninsured residents who will now receive health insurance coverage under this law. The law will benefit rural America by boosting mandatory funding for community health centers (South Georgia has 38 health centers) by \$11 billion over five years and making significant investments in the training of primary care doctors who will enhance prevention and early diagnosis of cancer.

Finally, a review of www.recovery.gov would reveal that many communities in the 2nd District have benefited from the Stimulus Act. In fact, Mitchell County, which Mr. Adams claimed received nothing, received \$8 million between February and December 2009. In Pelham, the Board of Education (BOE) received more than \$1.2 million and the Housing Authority (HA) received almost \$420,000. Camilla received \$42,500 for the Boys & Girls Club, over \$2.45 million for the Mitchell County BOE, more than \$1 million for the Camilla HA, and \$500,000 for the City of Camilla. Nearby Newton, in Baker County, received almost \$550,000 for the Baker County School District, \$650,000 for the Georgia Department of Transportation, and almost \$84,000 for the Newton HA.

The 2nd District has received nearly \$274 million in funding under the Stimulus Act. I am proud to have supported this legislation which most economists would agree has created and maintained jobs throughout Georgia and is helping to bring the economy back from the brink of disaster. Nevertheless, there is still much work to be done.

Hence, I want to continue being a strong, independent voice in Congress and will fight to ensure that all Americans can lead healthy and productive lives.

Sincerely,

Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress

